

December 16, 2004

## NEWS For Immediate Release NEWS

### **Winter Bull Moose Season on Yukon Drainage portion of Unit 18 Announced by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the US Fish and Wildlife Service**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the US Fish and Wildlife Service are announcing a winter season for residents to harvest bull moose in a portion of Unit 18. Federal public lands in Unit 18 are closed to the taking of moose except by rural Alaska residents of Unit 18, Upper Kalskag, Aniak, and Chuathbaluk. The season will be open from December 27, 2004 through January 5, 2005 on federal and non-federal lands westerly of a line from the mouth of the Ishkwowik River to the closest point of Dall Lake, then to the easternmost point of Takslesluk Lake, then along the Kuskokwim River drainage boundary to the Unit 18 border. Note that this season opening **does not** include that portion of Unit 18 south and east of, and including, the Kuskokwim River drainage. The harvest limit is one bull and under federal regulations, a legal bull must have antlers.

Federal subsistence and state regulations allow for this winter season to be opened by announcement. Prior to opening the winter season, local federal and state wildlife managers conferred with local villages to assess preferred season dates. The season chosen reflects this consultation and includes concerns that: travel conditions are safe within our ability to predict them though caution is advised, the announced moose season does not interfere with celebrations of Christmas or Slavic, the season is not opened after too many bulls have lost their antlers, and administrative considerations.

The Kuskokwim River drainage and southeastern portions of Unit 18 remain closed after considerable discussion with the Lower Kuskokwim Advisory Committee, the Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and area villages. The consensus was to leave this portion of Unit 18 closed to allow moose populations to become established.

Note that the portion of Unit 18 downriver from Mt. Village is **open** by this emergency order. This area was subject to a moose hunting moratorium and the population has responded well. With the present healthy population, it is appropriate for hunters to begin harvesting bull moose during this first winter hunt since the moratorium.

Hunters are reminded that a current State of Alaska hunting license and a moose harvest ticket are required. An unused 2004 moose harvest ticket issued for the fall season is still valid for the 10-day winter season. However, all hunters must obtain a valid 2005 hunting license beginning January 1. Only one bull moose may be taken under the combined state and federal winter seasons. Hunters who harvested a moose anytime after July 1 may not harvest an additional moose during this season.

#### **For Additional Information, Contact:**

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